



United States Senate Budget Committee

JEFF SESSIONS | Ranking Member

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Sessions Announces Opposition To Libya Resolution, Urging Dems To “At Once” Begin Budget Work

“No real work is scheduled in the Senate this week on the budget, nor is any on the debt ceiling. Instead, we are moving today to a Libya resolution. This resolution, not requested by the president, is not why we asked to cancel recess... For this reason, I will oppose cloture today and urge the Democrat majority to use this cancelled recess to begin at once the serious budget work, including discussion of a balanced budget amendment, that the American people expect. We have a statutory and constitutional obligation—and an obligation to the people we serve—to conduct open, thoughtful, and serious legislative work on these defining issues.”

WASHINGTON—U.S. Sen. Jeff Sessions (R-AL), Ranking Member of the Senate Budget Committee, issued the following statement today as the Senate is set to vote on a resolution authorizing the use of force in Libya. Sessions noted that President Obama urged Congress to stay in session to work on budget and debt issues, but the Senate has yet to schedule any such work:

“Weeks ago, I delivered a letter from the Republican Conference to the Majority Leader calling for him to keep the Senate in session so we could finally work on a budget and confront our dangerously high spending and debt. Last week Republicans renewed their call and, after initial resistance, the Majority Leader Reid eventually relented.

But while recess is cancelled, the Senate remains barred from doing any meaningful budget work. The Democrat-led Senate hasn’t passed a budget in 797 days or even made a budget public at all this year—even though it is required to do so by law. No real work is scheduled in the Senate this week on the budget, nor is any on the debt ceiling.

Instead, we are moving today to a Libya resolution. This resolution, not requested by the president, is not why we asked to cancel recess. Even President Obama, following Republican calls, said Congress ought to stay in town to work on the debt issue. For this reason, I will oppose cloture today and urge the Democrat majority to use this cancelled recess to begin at once the serious budget work, including discussion of a balanced budget amendment, that the American people expect—especially in this time of economic turmoil.

The pressing issue before us is whether we can continue to meet our financial obligations. But there is another set of obligations we are forgetting. We have a statutory and constitutional obligation—and an obligation to the people we serve—to conduct open, thoughtful, and serious legislative work on these defining issues. We should be performing analysis and review, holding hearings, presenting numbers and estimates, and conducting votes and debate. Each individual Senator will have to make an informed decision; a last-minute deal that has skirted the regular process, presented in the 11th hour, will not be acceptable.

The American people deserve better. To begin meeting our obligations to the public, I will introduce legislation requiring that any proposed increase to the debt limit be made public at least 7 days before a vote occurs. This is one debate from which we cannot, and must not, exclude the good people we serve.”

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- [Letter](#) from Ranking Members Sessions and Hatch asking White House to reveal details from debt negotiations
- [Letter](#) from Sessions to Chairman Kent Conrad asking for 72 hours to review budget resolution before committee mark-up
- [Timeline](#) of developments on Senate Democrats’ still-unseen FY2012 budget plan

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